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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 ADDIS ABABA 001507

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SUBJECT: SOMALI AMBASSADOR TO ETHIOPIA HIGHLIGHTS NEED FOR  
POWER-SHARING WITH HAWIYE

REF: ADDIS ABABA 1500 (NOTAL)

Classified By: DEPUTY POL-ECON COUNSELOR ERIC WONG. REASON: 1.4 (B) AND (D).

¶1. (C) SUMMARY. In a May 16 meeting with ORA analysts and deputy pol-econ counselor, Ambassador Abdulkarim Farah, the Transitional Federal Government of Somalia's (TFG) Ambassador to Ethiopia and PermRep to the African Union, offered his frank perspectives on TFG relations with the Hawiye clan, as both the TFG's representative in Addis Ababa, and as a prominent leader of the Hawiye/Hawadle sub-clan. Farah highlighted the need for power-sharing with the Hawiye, noting that five recent ambassadorial appointments were all Darod clan members, including the likely ambassador-designate to the United States. As Ethiopia exerted limited control over President Yusuf, external intervention by other parties to press Yusuf for greater political accommodation of Hawiye could be "very effective," but needed to occur long before the June 14 National Reconciliation Conference (NRC). Farah defended the recent appointment of a former Hawiye warlord as police commissioner, asserting that he had improved security in Mogadishu. Farah expressed concern that National Governance and Reconciliation Committee Chairman Ali Mahdi Mohamed (recently named an MP) could replace Ali Mohammed Ghedi as TFG Prime Minister (both are from the same Hawiye/Abgal sub-clan); that lack of a specific timetable risked making the NRC an open-ended process lasting years; and that the TFG parliament could decide to extend the TFG's mandate beyond October 2009. Farah highlighted the need for the TFG to provide basic social services and to encourage skilled Somali expatriates to return to Somalia. On security, Farah reported that TFG militia currently numbered 7,000, with another 3,500 in training; that the TFG would likely continue to rely on Ethiopian intelligence assets even after the bulk of Ethiopian troops withdrew; and that Burundi was ready to contribute two French-trained battalions to the AU peacekeeping operation in Somalia, but lacked strategic lift. END SUMMARY.

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HAWIYE CLAN CONCERNED ABOUT NUMBER OF DAROD APPOINTEES  
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¶2. (C) Farah said that just as he had played a major role in promoting Ethiopian and AU engagement on behalf of the TFG,

he now sought to help make the TFG "a sensible government."  
"The problem of Somalia is (the) Hawiye," he added. As TFG President Abdullahi Yusuf had "no authority" to determine Hawiye clan positions, a conference among Hawiye was urgently needed prior to the National Reconciliation Conference, in order to clarify and unify Hawiye positions. Tensions between the Hawiye clan, who controlled a majority of southern Somalia, and Yusuf's Darod clan, had existed since the 1960s and were not a recent phenomena, Farah said. However, recent actions by Yusuf, including government appointments of Darod, had frustrated Hawiye leaders:  
-- Power-sharing with Hawiye needed improvement. Yusuf was the most trusted person in the TFG, Farah said, but Hawiye were not included in Yusuf's "political machinery." The TFG had switched foreign ministers (from the Dir clan) three times in the last six months. While a Hawiye (Hassan Qeybdiid) had been appointed national police commissioner, five Darod had been appointed as generals. President Yusuf's 14-person entourage was comprised entirely of members of his Darod/Majerteen sub-clan. The office of the president should be the office of the Somali government, not "monopolized by one tribe," Farah said.  
-- The TFG had appointed ambassadors to India, Korea, Tanzania, and the United Arab Emirates in the previous week; all four were Darod.  
-- Within the next 3-4 days, Yusuf intended to name the son of Abdirashid Ali Shermake (former president of Somalia until his assassination in 1969) as TFG ambassador to the United States; he was also a Darod.

13. (C) Farah expressed concern that he could be replaced by a Darod, despite having built Ethiopian and AU support for the TFG during three years in Addis Ababa. Ironically, Farah

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noted, the Council of Islamic Courts (CIC) had placed a USD 5 million bounty on his head (septel), considering him a Hawiye turncoat co-opted by the Darod. Yusuf had to share power with loyal Hawiye leaders who believed in Somali nationalism, Farah said, not with the CIC.

14. (C) Farah said external intervention to raise the issue of political accommodation with Yusuf could be "very effective" in overcoming "the current deadlock," but needed to occur immediately, as much had to be done before the NRC. Such intervention, if known by Somali clan leaders, could also encourage greater Hawiye support for the TFG, he said. According to Farah, the GOE's control over President Yusuf was limited: Yusuf had been summoned 3-4 times to Addis Ababa, but Yusuf "doesn't always listen."

15. (C) Defending the recent appointment of Hawiye leaders Mohamed Dhere and Hassan Qeybdiid (as Governor of Benadir/Mayor of Mogadishu and National Police Commissioner, respectively), Farah rejected the contention that their appointment meant the TFG was "bringing back warlordism." Even Yusuf could be said to be a warlord, Farah countered. Farah said Qeybdiid, who had replaced a Darod, had improved security in Mogadishu by taking control of Bakara market (which had been renowned for arms smuggling), and by allowing business leaders (who had formerly supported the CIC) to retain and legally display firearms, once they had been registered by the police.

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ALI MAHDI MAY REPLACE GHEDI AS TFG PRIME MINISTER  
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16. (C) Farah observed that TFG Prime Minister Ali Mohammed Ghedi's family was now the most powerful in Mogadishu, as members of the Hawiye/Abgal/Warsangeli sub-clan who had long been associated with the Hawiye/Habr-Gedir/Ayr and with Mogadishu businessmen. Newly appointed Mayor of Mogadishu Mohamed Dhere was Ghedi's cousin, according to Farah.

17. (C) Nevertheless, Farah highlighted the possibility of

National Governance and Reconciliation Committee Chairman Ali Mahdi Mohamed replacing Ghedi as TFG Prime Minister, noting that both were from the same Hawiye/Abgal sub-clan. Farah observed that as the 1960 Somali constitution allowed former presidents to serve as MPs, Ali Mahdi would soon be made a member of parliament. This, in turn, could be a precursor to a ministerial appointment, Farah said.

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CONCERN THAT TFG MAY SEEK EXTENSION BEYOND 2009  
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18. (C) Questioned about preparations for the June 14 National Reconciliation Conference (NRC), Amb. Farah said some 3,000 participants were expected. However, he added, without a specific timetable for deliberations, the NRC risked becoming an open-ended process lasting for years, akin to the 2002-2004 Mbagathi process that led to the TFG's formation. Lack of funding was another concern, especially with conditionality imposed by donors like the EU. Farah outlined two competing visions of the TFG's role in the NRC: one asserted that the NRC should be independent of the TFG, and that the TFG should accept the NCR's recommendations; the other called for the TFG to be part of the NRC. The TFG was concerned about the former scenario, he said.

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TFG MUST PROVIDE BASIC SOCIAL SERVICES  
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19. (C) Farah expressed concern about the "real possibility" that the TFG, by parliamentary vote, could seek to extend its mandate beyond October 2009. The TFG needed to avoid such a "dangerous situation" and, instead, should campaign to build popular support. The next priority was providing what the people needed: health, education, and sanitation services, including schools, hospitals, and paved roads which could not be mined. Recognizing that PM Meles faced pressure to

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withdraw from Somalia, Farah said the TFG should not have to "depend on Ethiopian firepower." Asked about the prospect of Ethiopian civil service advisors coming to Mogadishu to provide temporary assistance to TFG ministries (as proposed by Ethiopian State Minister Tekeda; see reftel), Farah said training for TFG capacity-building was already underway in Addis Ababa, but would be welcomed in Mogadishu once allowed by security conditions.

110. (C) Citing the problem of illiterate MPs, Farah said Somali diaspora should be urged to return to Somalia and contribute their expertise. However, there was no mechanism to incorporate diaspora into the 275-person TFG. "There is no room for them in the TFG, and we are not making room for them in the TFG," Farah opined.

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TFG MILITIA: 7,000-STRONG; ANOTHER 3,500 IN TRAINING  
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111. (C) Questioned about TFG militia, Farah said the TFG had trained nearly 7,000 militia in Baledogle who were now patrolling throughout Somalia, from Kismayo to Puntland. Another 3,500 militia were undergoing training. Farah said that on May 18 he would travel to his hometown of Beled Weyne to establish a militia training camp there, at the instruction of President Yusuf. Farah estimated that approximately 60 per cent of the militia were Darod, 30 per cent were Hawiye, and the remaining 10 per cent were from other clans; the majority of security forces in Mogadishu were Darod. He underscored that the TFG had not sought to exclude Darod from the militia, and attributed the imbalance to Hawiye having primarily supported the Council of Islamic Courts (CIC). The TFG aimed to have a total of 40,000 security forces (including military, police, intelligence, and prison officials), Farah said.

¶12. (C) "Ethiopia will never completely withdraw from Somalia," Farah said. Ethiopia would withdraw tanks and heavy weapons, as well as uniformed forces, but would maintain intelligence assets within Somalia. Ethiopia would also keep the bulk of its troops in Ethiopia but near the border with Somalia, Farah added, as they were needed to provide a "safety valve" for the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM). (NOTE: Farah's assessment is consistent with statements from Ethiopian PM Meles. END NOTE.) Farah hailed Ethiopian intelligence's ability to assess the situation in Somalia and to operate effectively in Mogadishu. As Somali-speakers, "they are invisible," he said.

¶13. (C) While Ethiopia needed an exit strategy, Farah said he objected to the second phase of AMISOM deployment, which called for stationing AMISOM troops in Beled Weyne and Kismayo. Instead, AU troops should be concentrated in Mogadishu for force protection. He noted that Burundi was ready to contribute two French-trained battalions to AMISOM, but the new French administration had reneged on former President Chirac's pledge to provide strategic lift. Farah concluded by expressing appreciation for current U.S. policy toward Somalia, and U.S. support of the TFG, especially in light of the killing of U.S. troops in Mogadishu in 1993.

¶14. (C) COMMENT: TFG Ambassador Farah touched on similar themes in a candid meeting the previous day with Special Envoy for Somalia-designate Amb. John Yates (septel). As both the TFG's long-serving PermRep to the African Union and Ambassador to Ethiopia, and a Hawiye/Hawadle, Farah is uniquely qualified to present both the TFG "party line" and a Hawiye insider's perspective of Hawiye-Darod relations. Farah has served as the TFG's representative in Addis at a critical time: not only building AU consensus on the need to deploy AMISOM, but also succeeding in having the AU affirm the TFG's legitimacy and forgive Somalia's arrears to the AU. Farah's possible departure and replacement by a Darod with less experience could impair the TFG's ability to engage Ethiopia and the AU effectively. END COMMENT.  
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